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Siamou language

Siamou, also known as **Sɛmɛ** (Seme), is a language spoken mainly in Burkina Faso. It is unclassified within the Niger–Congo language family.

The speakers call themselves *Seme*. The Jula exonym is *Siamou*.[3]

Siamou	
Sɛmɛ	
Native to	Burkina Faso
Native speakers	40,000 (ca. 1999)[1]
Language family	Niger–Congo ▪ Atlantic–Congo ▪ Kru? ▪ **Siamou**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`sif`
Glottolog	`siam1242 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/siam1242)`[2]

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Classification

Siamou is traditionally classed as Kru. However, according to Roger Blench (2013) and Pierre Vogler (2015), the language bears little resemblance to Kru.[4][3] Güldemann (2018) also leaves out Siamou as unclassified within Niger-Congo.[5]

Like the SOV Senufo languages, but unlike the SVO Central Gur languages, Siamou word order is SOV.[5]

Geographical distribution

In 1999, it was spoken by 20,000 people in western Burkina Faso and another 20,000 in the Ivory Coast and Mali.[1] In Burkina Faso, it is mainly spoken in the province of Kénédougou, around the provincial capital Orodara and the surrounding villages of Bandougou, Didéri, Diéri, Diéridéni, Diossogou, Kotoudéni, Lidara, and Tin.[3] Siamou has one major dialect, Bandougou. In addition, there are minor dialectal differences among the Siamou spoken in Orodara and in surrounding villages. It is also spoken in Toussiana Department of Burkina Faso.

See also

- Languages of Africa

Further reading

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Notes

1. Siamou (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/sif/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
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3. Vogler, Pierre. 2015. *Le sèmè/siamou n'est pas une langue kru (https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01182225v2)*.
4. Blench (2013:50)
5. Güldemann, Tom (2018). "Historical linguistics and genealogical language classification in Africa". In Güldemann, Tom (ed.). *The Languages and Linguistics of Africa*. The World of Linguistics series. **11**. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. pp. 58–444. doi:10.1515/9783110421668-002 (https://doi.org/10.1515%2F9783110421668-002). ISBN 978-3-11-042606-9.

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- Blench, Roger (2013) "Why Is Africa So Linguistically Undiverse? Exploring Substrates and Isolates (https://www.academia.edu/5204683/Why_is_Africa_so_linguistically_undiverse_Exploring_substrates_and_isolates)." in *Mother Tongue*, Issue XVIII, pp. 43–78. Journal of the Association for the Study of Language in Prehistory.

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